

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /181 W

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R 071615Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8345

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY DACCA

DARUSBAY/AMCONSUL BOMBAY 5173

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG POUCH

USLO PEKING POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 14388

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEBATE

REF: NEW DELHI 14322

SUMMARY: IN ADDITION TO HIS FRIENDLY COMMENTS ON INDO-US RELATIONS (REFTEL), FOREIGN MINISTER SWARAN SINGH WOUND UP THE TWO-DAY FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEBATE IN THE RAJYA SABHA BY SPEAKING BRIEFLY BUT SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVELY ABOUT INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS (DENYING THE SOVIETS HAD ASKED FOR BASE RIGHTS), AND BY PROVIDING SOME DETAILS ABOUT INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS IN A STRAIGHTFORWARD MANNER. HE AVOIDED CHINA EXCEPT TO SAY THAT THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE "RECIPROCITY" IN ANY IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

SEVERAL OPPOSITION LEADERS HAD CAUTIONED ABOUT COMING TOO FAR UNDER SOVIET INFLUENCE. SWARAN SINGH RESPONDED BY SUMMAR-
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IZING THE AGREEMENTS, BY ASSERTING THAT CONTRARY TO SOME

CRITICISM THEY WOULD HELP THE "COMMON MAN", AND BY DENYING THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD BE INVOLVED IN MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECTS. ON POSSIBLE PORT FACILITIES, SWARAN SINGH SAID, "EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THERE IS NO MILITARY CONTENT IN OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH THE USSR. THEY HAVE NEVER ASKED AND WE HAVE NEVER GIVEN ANY FACILITIES IN THE FORM OF BASE, NAVAL OR OTHERWISE, AND ALL SPECULATION TO THAT EFFECT IS TOTALLY UNFOUNDED AND I WOULD REJECT IT WITH THE GREATEST EMPHASIS AT MY DISPOSAL."

2. INDO-PAK RELATIONS: SWARAN SINGH EXPLAINED THAT ON NOVEMBER 9 THE GOI SENT THE GOP AND AIDE MEMOIRE DRAWING ITS ATTENTION TO BHUTTO'S STATEMENTS ON KASHMIR, WHICH "COULD ONLY CAUSE APPREHENSION" ABOUT PAKISTAN'S INTENTIONS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIMIA AGREEMENT. ON NOVEMBER 21 HE FOLLOWED UP WITH A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO AZIZ AHMED ABOUT BHUTTO'S COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE GUERRILLA WARFARE TO LIBERATE KASHMIR. AZIZ AHMED REPLIED THAT BHUTTO WAS TRYING TO PACIFY A SECTION OF THE CROWD AND THAT BHUTTO REPEATEDLY SAID DURING HIS TOUR THAT WAR WOULD NOT RESOLVE THE KASHMIR ISSUE. PAKISTAN REMAINED COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING THE SIMLA AGREEMENT, ACCORDING TO AZIZ AHMED. SWARAN SINGH SAID INDIA SHOULD NOT IGNORE THE DEFENSIVE NATURE OF THE PAKISTANI REPLY AND ITS ATTEMPT TO COME BACK AGAIN TO THE SIMLA AGREEMENT. SWARAN SINGH THEN ANNOUNCED THAT AS OF DECEMBER 2, 30,200 POWS HAD RETURNED TO PAKISTAN; 22,600 NON-BENGALIS TO PAKISTAN; AND 52,800 BENGALIS TO BANGLADESH.

3. COMMENT: ELABORATING ON SWARAN SINGH'S REMARKS ON PAKISTAN, MEA JOINT SECRETARY (PAKISTAN) ASHOK CHIB TOLD POLCOUNSELOR DECEMBER 7 THAT INDIANS HAD NOT PUBLICIZED ALL BHUTTO REMARKS IN AZAD KASHMIR SINCE SOME OF THESE DIRECTED AT STIRRING UP HINDU-MOSLIM ANTAGONISMS(ALLEGEDLY REFERRING TO HINDU ATTITUDES TOWARDS EATING OR DRINKING WITH MUSLIMS). CHIB SAID AZAD KASHMIR RADIO BROADCAST OF OFFENSIVE NATURE STEPPED UP SINCE OCTOBER, BEGINING SHORTLY BEFORE BHUTTO'S TRIP TO AREA AND CONTINUING TO PRESENT. INDIANS HAD COMPLAINED TO THIS EFFECT, AND NOW HAD BEGUN THEMSELVES BROADCASTING COMMENTARIES IN LAST FEW WEEKS ON SNMLA AND PAKISTAN DEVIATIONS THEREFROM. PAKS HAVE NOW FOR THEIR PART COMPLAINED

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OF THESE. CHIB PROFESSED PUZZLEMENT AT PAK MOTIVE, OFFERING INTERNAL POLITICS AND DIVERSION OF ATTENTION FROM BALUCH/ BATHAN PROBLEMS, OR POSSIBLY AS BHUTTO-STYLE LEAD-IN TO DISCUSSIONS ON KASHMIR ISSUE. HE SAID KASHMIR BROUHAHA HAD NOT AFFECTED EXCHANGES OF PERSONS. SCHNEIDER

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